

CHAPTER 6

DoD SERVICE MEDALS

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Service medals, campaign medals, and service ribbons denote participation by a Service member in a campaign, war, national emergency, expedition, or the fulfillment of specified Service requirements in a creditable manner. Those awards take precedence immediately after nonmilitary decorations and are normally worn in the order earned. However, actual precedence varies depending on the Service member's branch of Military Service. Appendix D describes all the U.S. service medals, campaign medals, and service ribbons that have been authorized for the Armed Forces of the United States.

2. Since World War II, there have been over 100 service medals, campaign medals, and service ribbons authorized. In most instances, the Military Services control the policies as they pertain to their Service members. However, there are nine service medals that are considered Defense service **awards** and, as such, the policies fall under the purview of the ASD(FMP). Those service awards are as follows:

- a. Prisoner of War Medal.
- b. National Defense Service Medal.
- c. Antarctica Service Medal.
- d. Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.
- e. Vietnam Service Medal.
- f. Southwest Asia **Service** Medal.
- g. Armed Forces Semite Medal.
- h. Humanitarian Service Medal.
- i. Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

3. Policies and procedures for non-Defense service awards and their appurtenances are determined by the Secretary concerned and, as such, appropriate Military Service regulations should be consulted in determining a Service member's entitlement to a particular award.

B. PRISONER OF WAR (POW) MEDAL

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. Authorized by Section 1128, title 10, U.S.C. reference (o)).

b. Authorized for any person who, while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Armed Forces, was taken prisoner and held captive after April 5, 1917.

(1) Civilians and Foreign Nationals. The POW Medal shall be issued only to U.S. and foreign civilians who have received credit for U.S. military service, as determined by the DoD Civilian and/or Military Service Review Board and Advisory Board under DoD Directive 1000.20 (reference (p)). The period of creditable military service must include the period of captivity from date of capture through date of release. While no minimum time period of captivity exists as eligibility criteria for the POW Medal, the Services should determine each case on its merits using the language in 10 U.S.C. and the Secretary of Defense Memorandum (references (e), (f) and (q)). The Secretary of Defense authorized on January 27, 1990, the POW Medal for the Philippine Commonwealth Army and Recognized Guerrilla Unit Veterans who were held captive between December 7, 1941, and September 26, 1945.

(2) Missing in Action. The POW Medal only shall be issued to the legal next-of-kin (NOK) of military personnel or civilians who have received credit for U.S. military service and whose POW status officially has been confirmed and recognized as such by the Military Departments. The NOK of persons listed as “missing, but for whom there is no evidence of having been a POW” shall not be issued the POW Medal. Return of remains, in and of itself, does not constitute evidence of POW status. The NOK of the POWs who die in captivity may be issued the POW Medal irrespective of the length of the captivity period.

(3) Hostages, Detainees, and Internees. The POW Medal shall be issued only to those taken prisoner by foreign armed forces that are hostile to the United States, under circumstances which the Secretary concerned finds to have been comparable to those under which persons have generally been held captive by enemy armed forces during periods of armed conflict. For that medal, armed conflicts are defined as “World War I, World War II, Korean Conflict, Vietnam Era and Southwest Asia Conflict.”

c. Character of Service. Any person convicted by a U.S. military tribunal of misconduct or a criminal charge or whose discharge is less than honorable based on actions while a POW is ineligible for the medal. The POWs whose conduct was not in accord with the Code of Conduct and whose actions are documented by U.S. military records, are ineligible for the medal. Resolution of questionable cases shall be the responsibility of the Secretaries concerned.

2. Subsequent Awards. No more than one POW Medal shall be awarded. For subsequent acts justifying award of the medal, service stars shall be awarded and worn on the suspension and service ribbon of the medal. A period of captivity terminates on return to U.S. military control.

Escapees who do not return to U.S. military control and are recaptured by an enemy do not begin a new period of captivity for subsequent award of the POW Medal.

3. Presentation. While service medals (unlike decorations for valor, meritorious achievement, and service) are not normally presented in formal military ceremonies, military representatives of the Active and Reserve components may participate in POW Medal presentation ceremonies, if requested, under guidance and procedures issued by the Secretaries of the Military Departments. Additionally, veterans organizations, former POW associations, public officials, etc., may receive and present the medal to former POWs or their NOK. Engraving of the POW Medal, if desired, shall be at the expense of the recipient.

4. Manner of Wearing. Section 1128 of title 10, U. S.C., "Prisoner-of-war medal: issue," (reference (o)) establishing the POW Medal specifies that it shall be displayed immediately following decorations awarded for individual heroism, meritorious achievement, or meritorious service, and before any other service medal, campaign medal, or service ribbon authorized to be displayed. To ensure consistency among the Services, the POW Medal shall be placed ahead of the Good Conduct Medal in the order of precedence.

5. Posthumous Awards. The POW Medal maybe awarded posthumously and, when so directed, may be presented to such representatives of the deceased as the Secretary concerned considers appropriate.

6. Procedures for Issuing the POW Medal. The Military Departments shall receive requests for, and issue, the POW Medal to eligible individuals or their NOK, as follows:

a. All requests for the POW Medal will be initiated by eligible former POWs, or their NOK, using a personal letter addressed to the appropriate Service Records Center located at 9700 Page Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5199.

b. Veterans organizations, former POW associations, public officials, etc., may receive requests for the medal from former POWs, or their NOK, and forward them to the appropriate Service Records Center. Such organizations and/or individuals would agree to receive the medals and subsequently present, or forward, them to the requester.

c. **After** verification of POW status and character of service of the former POW, the medal shall be **forwarded** through mail in accordance with the desires of the requester (directly to the requester or to a third party for presentation). A cover letter explaining the background and symbolism of the medal shall accompany the medal.

d. The Services shall issue the medal to eligible active duty former POWs and reflect the award in appropriate records.

C. NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL (NDSM)

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. Authorized by **E.O. 10448** and the Secretary of Defense Memorandum, (references (r) and (s)).

(1) Honorable active service as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States for any period between June 27, 1950 and July 27, 1954, or between January 1, 1961 and August 14, 1974. During those periods, Service members in the following categories shall NOT be eligible for the NDSM:

(a) Members of the Guard and Reserve Forces on short tours of active duty to fulfill training obligations under an inactive duty training program.

(b) Any Service member on TDY or TAD to serve on boards, courts, commissions, and similar organizations.

(c) Any Service member on active duty for the sole purpose of undergoing a physical examination.

(2) Honorable service as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States for any period between August 2, 1990, and November 30, 1995. Service members on active duty, members of the Selected Reserve in good standing, and members of other than the Selected Reserve who were called to active duty shall also be eligible. During that period, Service members in the following categories shall NOT be considered eligible:

(a) Any Service member on active duty for the sole purpose of undergoing a physical examination.

(b) Any member of the Individual Ready Reserve, the Inactive National Guard or the Standby or Retired Reserve whose active duty service was for training only, or to serve on boards, courts, commissions, and similar organizations.

b. Exceptions to policy criteria in subparagraphs C. 1.a. (1) and (2), above, maybe granted by the Military Departments.

c. Notwithstanding these limitations, any member of the United States Coast Guard or the Reserve or Guard Forces of the Armed Forces who, between January 1, 1961 and August 14, 1974, became eligible for award of either the AFEM or the Vietnam Service Medal or between August 2, 1990 and November 30, 1995, became eligible for award of the Southwest Asia Service Medal shall be eligible for award of the **NDSM**.

2. Subsegment Award. A bronze service star shall be worn on the suspension and service ribbon of the NDSM by Service members who earned the medal during two different periods of eligibility (e.g., during the period 1961 through 1974, and during the period 1990 through 1995).

3. Posthumous Awards. The NDSM may be awarded posthumously.

D. ANTARCTICA SERVICE MEDAL

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. Any person who, from January 2, 1946, to a date to be announced, meets any of the following qualifications shall be eligible to receive the Antarctica Service Medal: (For that award, Antarctica is defined as the "area south of latitude 60 S." The Antarctica Service Medal is authorized by DoD Instruction 1348.9, "Antarctica Service Medal," (reference (t)).)

(1) Any member of the Armed Forces of the United States, U.S. citizen, or resident alien of the United States, who as a member of a U.S. expedition, participates in or has participated in scientific, direct support, or **exploratory** operations in Antarctica.

(2) Any member of the Armed Forces of the United States, U.S. citizen, or resident alien of the United States, who participates in or has participated in a foreign Antarctic expedition in Antarctica in coordination with a U.S. expedition and who is or was under the sponsorship and approval of competent U.S. Government authority.

(3) Any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who participates in, or has participated in, flights as a member of the crew of an aircraft flying to or from the Antarctic continent in support of operations in Antarctica.

(4) Any member of the Armed Forces of the United States, U.S. citizen, or resident alien of the United States who serves or has served in a U.S. ship operating south of latitude 60S in support of U.S. programs in Antarctica.

(5) Any person, including citizens of foreign nations, not fulfilling the qualifications under subparagraphs D. 1.a.(1) through D. 1 a.(4), above, or paragraph D. 1 b., below, but who participates in or has participated in a U.S. Antarctic expedition in Antarctica at the invitation of a participating U.S. Agency may be given the award by the Secretary of the Department under whose cognizance the expedition falls, provided the commander of the military support force, as senior U.S. representative in Antarctica, considers that the member has performed outstanding and exceptional service and shared the hardships and hazards of the expedition.

b. Subsequent to June 1, 1973, minimum time limit for award is 30 days under competent orders to duty at sea or ashore, south of latitude 60S. Individuals assigned to duty at an outlying station on the Antarctic continent may qualify for the award after 15 days. Effective July 1, 1987, flight crews of aircraft providing logistics support from outside the Antarctic area may

qualify for the award after 15 missions (one flight in and out during any 24-hour period equals one mission). The days do not have to be consecutive.

2. Subsequent Awards. No Service member shall be authorized to receive more than one Antarctica Service Medal. Subsequent awards shall be denoted by wearing of appropriate devices on the suspension and service ribbon of the medal.

3. Devices

a. Clasps. Personnel who stay On the Antarctic COntinent during the winter months shall be eligible to wear a bronze clasp with the words “Wintered Over” on the suspension ribbon of the medal. A gold clasp is authorized for the second wintering-over period, and a silver clasp is worn to denote the third or subsequent wintering-over period. Not more than one clasp shall be worn on the suspension ribbon of the medal.

b. Disk. The first wintering-over eligibility shall be denoted by a bronze disk worn on the service ribbon of the medal. A gold disk shall represent the second wintering-over period. A silver disk shall represent the third or subsequent wintering-over period. No more than one disk may be worn on the service ribbon.

4. Manner of Wearing. The Antarctica Service Medal shall take precedence immediately after the Korean Service Medal.

5. Posthumous Awards. The Antarctica Service Medal maybe awarded posthumously.

E. ARMED FORCES EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL (AFEM)

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. Personnel Eligible. The AFEM, authorized by E.O. 10977 (reference (u)), maybe awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who after July 1, 1958:

(1) Participate, or have participated, as members of U.S. military units in a U.S. military operation in which Service members of any Military Department participate, in the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in significant numbers.

(2) Encounter during such participation foreign armed opposition, or are otherwise placed, or have been placed, in such position that, in the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, hostile action by foreign armed forces was imminent even though it did not materialize.

b. Categories of Operations. The AFEM may be authorized for the following three categories of operations:

(1) U.S. military operations.

(2) U.S. operations in direct support of the United Nations (U.N.).

(3) U.S. operations of assistance for friendly foreign nations.

c. Definitions

(1) The “area of operations” is defined as follows:

(a) The foreign territory on which troops have actually landed or are present and specifically deployed for the direct support of the designated military operation.

(b) Adjacent water areas in which ships are operating, patrolling, or providing direct support of operations.

(c) The air space above and adjacent to the area in which operations are being conducted.

(2) “Direct support” is defined as services being supplied to the combat forces in the area of operations by ground units, ships, and aircraft provided it involves actually entering the designated area. That includes ships and aircraft providing fire, patrol, guard, reconnaissance, or other military support.

d. Degree of Participation. Service members must be bona fide members of a unit engaged in the operation or meet one or more of the following criteria:

(1) Be engaged in direct support for 30 consecutive days in the area of operations (or for the full period when an operation is less than 30 days duration) or for 60 nonconsecutive days provided this support involves entering the area of operations.

(2) Be engaged in actual combat, or duty that is equally as hazardous as combat duty, during the operation with armed opposition, regardless of time in the area.

(3) Participate as a regularly assigned crew member of an aircraft flying into, out of, within, or over the area in support of the military operations.

e. Limitations on Awarding Medals. The medal shall be awarded only for operations for which no other U.S. campaign medal is approved. However, this does not prevent award eligibility for subsequent on-going operations if the associated campaign medal has been terminated. No individual shall be eligible for both the AFEM and a campaign medal awarded during a single tour in the designated operation. For operations in which personnel of only one Military Department participate, the medal shall be awarded only if there is no other suitable

award available to that Department. The Military Service of the Service member on which qualification for the award of the AFEM is based shall have been honorable.

f. Election of the AFEM or Vietnam Service Medal. Service members who earned the AFEM for service in Vietnam between July 1, 1958 and July 3, 1965, may elect to receive the Vietnam Service Medal instead of the AFEM. However, no Service member may be issued both medals for service in Vietnam.

g. Wear of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (AFEM) and Southwest Asia Service Medal (SWASM). Service members who earned the SWASM and subsequently become eligible at any time for the Operation SOUTHERN WATCH AFEM may wear both awards, with the exception of those who become eligible for both awards during one tour in Southwest Asia (SWA). Service members who become eligible for both awards during their initial tour in SWA may elect to receive either the SWASM or the AFEM, but may not be issued both medals for a single tour in SWA. Service members who become eligible for both awards during their initial tour in SWA and elect to receive the SWASM may be awarded the AFEM for participation in Operation SOUTHERN WATCH during a subsequent tour in SWA under the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum (reference (v)).

2. Approval of Operations. **Subsequent** to July 1, 1958, the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall designate U.S. military operations that qualify for the AFEM, and they shall specify the degree of participation in designated operations warranting award of the medal. Appendix E identifies those operations that have been approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for award of the AFEM.

3. Subsequent Awards. No more than one medal shall be awarded to any one Service member. For each succeeding operation **justifying** such awards, a service star shall be awarded and worn on the suspension and service ribbon of the medal.

4. Manner of Wearing. The AFEM shall take precedence immediately after the Antarctica Service Medal.

5. Posthumous Awards. The AFEM may be awarded posthumously and, when so awarded, may be presented to such representative of the deceased, as may be deemed appropriate by the Secretary concerned.

F. VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. General

(1) Authorized by E.O. 11231 (reference (w)).

(2) Awarded to all members of the Armed Forces of the United States serving at any time between July 4, 1965 and March 28, 1973, in Vietnam, its contiguous waters, or airspace, thereover.

(3) Awarded to all members of the Armed Forces of the United States serving at any time between July 4, 1965 and March 28, 1973, in Thailand, Laos, or Cambodia, or the airspaces, thereover, and in direct support of operations in Vietnam.

(4) Service members qualified for the AFEM by reasons of service between July 1, 1958, and July 3, 1965, in an area for which the Vietnam Service Medal was authorized subsequently shall remain qualified for that medal. Upon application, any such Service member may be awarded the Vietnam Service Medal instead of the AFEM for such service. However, no Service member shall be entitled to both awards.

(5) For that award, Vietnam and the contiguous waters are defined as “from a point on the east coast of Vietnam at the juncture of Vietnam with China southeastward to 21 degrees N. latitude, 108 degrees, 15 minutes E. longitude; thence, southward to 18 degrees N. latitude, 108 degrees, 15 minutes E. longitude; thence southeastward to 17 degrees, 30 minutes N. latitude, 111 degrees E. longitude; thence, southward to 11 degrees N. latitude, 111 degrees E. longitude; thence, southwestward to 7 degrees N. latitude, 105 degrees E. longitude; thence, westward to 7 degrees N. latitude, 103 degrees E. longitude; thence, northward to 9 degrees, 30 minutes N. latitude, 103 degrees E. longitude; thence, northeastward to 10 degrees, 15 minutes N. latitude, 104 degrees, 27 minutes E. longitude; thence, northward to a point on the west coast of Vietnam at the juncture of Vietnam with Cambodia. “

b. Specific

(1) Personnel Eligible. To be eligible a Service member must be as follows:

(a) Attached to or regularly serving for one, or more, days with an organization participating in or directly supporting ground (military) operations.

(b) Attached to or regularly serving for one, or more, days aboard a naval vessel directly supporting military operations.

(c) Actually participate as a crew member in one or more aerial flights directly supporting military operations.

(d) Serve on temporary duty for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days. Those time limitations may be waived for personnel participating in actual combat operations.

(2) Limitation on Medal. The medal shall be awarded only for operations for which no other U.S. campaign medal is approved. No Service member may be issued both the Vietnam

Service Medal and the AFEM for service in Vietnam, and furthermore they shall be entitled to no more than one award of the Vietnam Service Medal.

2. Stars. A bronze service star shall be worn on the suspension and service ribbon of the Vietnam Service Medal for the Service member's participation during the approved campaign periods. Appendix F identifies those campaigns that have been approved.

3. Posthumous Awards. The Vietnam Service Medal maybe awarded posthumously.

G. SOUTHWEST ASIA SERVICE MEDAL (SWASM)

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. General

(1) Authorized by E.O. 12754 (reference (x)),

(2) Individuals authorized that award must have served in support of Operation DESERT SHIELD or DESERT STORM in one or more of the following areas from August 2, 1990 through November 30, 1995: the Persian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, that portion of the Arabian Sea that lies north of 100 N latitude and west 680 E longitude, as well as the total land areas of Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.

(3) Individuals serving in Israel, Egypt, Turkey, **Syria**, and Jordan (including the airspace and territorial waters) directly supporting combat operations from January 17, 1991, through November 30, 1995, shall also be eligible for award of the medal.

b. Specific. To be eligible, a Service member must be:

(1) Attached to or regularly serving for one or more days with an organization participating in ground and/or shore (military) operations.

(2) Attached to or regularly serving for one or more days aboard a naval vessel directly supporting military operations.

(3) Actually participating as a crew member in one or more aerial flights directly supporting military operations in the areas designated in paragraph 6. 1.a., above.

(4) Serving on temporary duty for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days. Those time limitations may be waived for people participating in actual combat operations.

2. Awarding

a. The Southwest Asia Service Medal may be awarded posthumously.

b. Each Military Department may grant exceptions to the eligibility criteria outlined in subparagraph H. 1 b., below, and shall prescribe appropriate regulations for administrative processing, awarding and wearing of the Southwest Asia Service Medal, ribbon, and appurtenances.

3. Stars. One bronze service star shall be worn on the suspension and service ribbon of the Southwest Asia Service Medal for participation in each campaign period (i.e., an individual who participated in one campaign would wear the medal and/or service ribbon with one star). The first campaign period is designated as the "Defense of Saudi Arabia" with corresponding dates of August 2, 1990 through January 16, 1991. The second campaign is designated "Liberation and Defense of Kuwait" from January 17, 1991 to April 11, 1991. The third and final campaign, is designated the "Southwest Asia Cease Fire Campaign," and extends from April 12, 1991, through November 30, 1995. Service members eligible for the SWASM based on participation in Operation PROVIDE COMFORT will wear the medal and service ribbon with star.

H. ARMED FORCES SERVICE MEDAL (AFSM)

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. General. The Armed Forces Service Medal (AFSM) authorized by E.O. 12985 (reference (y)) may be awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who, after June 1, 1992:

(1) Participate, or have participated, as members of United States military units, in a United States military operation that is deemed to be a significant activity; and

(2) Encounter no foreign armed opposition or imminent threat of hostile action.

b. Specific. Service members must be members of a unit participating for 1 or more days in the operation within the designated area of eligibility, or meet one or more of the following criteria.

(1) Be engaged in direct support for 30 consecutive days in the area of eligibility (or for the full period when an operation is of less than 30 days duration) or for 60 nonconsecutive days provided this support involves entering the area of eligibility.

(2) Participate as a regularly assigned crew member of an aircraft flying into, out of, within, or over the area of eligibility in support of the operation.

c. Qualifying Operations

(1) The AFSM maybe authorized for significant United States military activities for which no other United States campaign or service medal is appropriate, such as:

(a) Peacekeeping operations.

(b) Prolonged humanitarian operations.

(2) The AFSM maybe awarded for United States military operations in direct support of the United Nations (UN) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and for operations of assistance to friendly foreign nations.

d. Guidelines

(1) The AFSM provides recognition to participants who deploy to the designated area of eligibility for the qualifying operation. Outstanding or meritorious performance of nondeployed or remotely located support units and individuals is not justification for award of the AFSM. Such performance maybe recognized by appropriate unit and/or individual decorations.

(2) Because the AFSM maybe awarded for a prolonged humanitarian operation, distinction between the AFSM and the Humanitarian Service Medal (HSM) must be maintained.

(a) The HSM is an individual award, presented to individuals who are physically present at the site of immediate relief and who directly contribute to and influence the humanitarian action. The HSM is only awarded for service during the identified “period of immediate relief”; eligibility for the HSM terminates once (if) the humanitarian action evolves into an “established ongoing operation beyond the initial emergency condition.”

(b) The AFSM is a theater award, authorized for presentation to all participants who meet eligibility requirements established for a designated operation.

(c) For operations in which all deployed participants are awarded the HSM and for which the “period of immediate relief” coincides with the duration of significant deployed operations, award of the AFSM is not authorized.

(d) Humanitarian operations for which some (or all) participants are awarded the HSM, which continue beyond the “period of immediate relief.”

e. Definitions

(1) “Significant activity” is defined as a United States military operation considered to be of such a high degree of scope, impact, and national or international significance as to warrant

the permanent commemoration and recognition afforded by award of a campaign or service medal.

(2) “Area of eligibility” is defined as follows:

(a) The foreign territory on which troops have actually landed or are present and specifically deployed for the operation.

(b) Adjacent water areas in which ships are operating, patrolling, or providing direct support of the operation.

(c) The air space above and adjacent to the area in which operations are being conducted.

(3) “Direct support” is defined as services being supplied to participating forces in the area of eligibility by ground units, ships, and aircraft provided it involves actually entering the designated area of eligibility. This includes units, ships, and aircraft providing logistic, patrol, guard, reconnaissance, or other military support within the designated area of eligibility.

f. Limitations on Awarding Medals

(1) AFSM shall be **awarded** only for operations for which no other United States campaign or service medal is approved.

(2) For operations in which personnel of only one Military Department participate, the AFSM shall be awarded only if there is no other suitable award available to that Department.

(3) The military service of the Service member on which qualification for the award of the AFSM is based shall have been honorable.

(4) Award of the AFSM is not authorized for participation in national or international exercises.

(5) The AFSM shall not be awarded for NATO or UN operations not involving significant, concurrent United States military support operations.

2. Approval and Designation of Area of Eligibility. The Joint Chiefs of Staff shall designate United States military operations subsequent to 1 June 1992 that qualify for the AFSM.

3. Subsegment Awards. No more than one medal shall be awarded to any one Service member. Second and subsequent awards will be denoted by 3/16-inch bronze service stars. A 3/16-inch silver star will be worn instead of 5 bronze stars.

4. Manner of Wearing. The AFSM shall take precedence immediately before the Humanitarian Service Medal.

5. Posthumous Awards. The AFSM may be awarded posthumously and, when so awarded, may be presented to such representative of the deceased as maybe deemed appropriate by the Secretary concerned.

I. HUMANITARIAN SERVICE MEDAL (HSM)

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. General. The Humanitarian Service Medal, authorized by E.O. 11965, (reference(z)), may be awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States and their Reserve components who, subsequent to April 1, 1975, distinguished themselves as individuals or as members of U.S. military units or ships by meritorious, direct participation in a significant military act, or operation of a humanitarian nature. Direct participation is defined as being physically present at the designated location, having directly contributed to and influenced the action. Designated location is the immediate site(s) of the humanitarian operations as defined by the Presidential request for assistance in the United States or the Department of State (DoS) for overseas areas. When appropriate, the local commander in his or her recommendation may propose specific clarification of designated boundaries based on the intent of the Presidential or Department of State request. Specifically excluded from eligibility are Service members or elements remaining at geographically separated locations or who were assigned to the location but did not make a direct contribution to **nor influenced** the action. Award of the Humanitarian Service Medal does not prevent or conflict with other medals or ribbons awarded on the basis of unit achievement, or of individual valor, achievement, or meritorious service. No Service member shall be entitled to more than one award of the Humanitarian Service Medal for participation in the same military actor operation of a humanitarian nature.

b. Specific. The following types of military acts or operations may qualify for award of the Humanitarian Service Medal:

(1) Significant assistance in the event of national or international disasters, natural or man-made, such as, but not limited to, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, typhoons, or conflagrations.

(2) Relief to a starvation area.

(3) Evacuation of personnel from an area threatened by a hostile force.

(4) Support or resettlement of refugees or evacuees.

(5) Other significant military activities, directly related to humanitarian service, as designated in Military Service regulations. These must be above and beyond routine actions.

For example, normal Search and Rescue (SAR) operations conducted by specially trained SAR units would not be eligible for HSM consideration. Similarly, in accordance with the laws and traditions of the seas, the rescue of stricken vessels by naval units would not normally be eligible.

(6) Acts or operations of a similar nature, as determined by the award approval authority.

c. Guidelines. Services rendered in the actor operation being considered must meet the following criteria:

(1) Be of a major significance.

(2) Provide immediate relief, relieve human suffering, and should save lives (property may be a factor).

(3) Must have affected the outcome of the situation (**nonaction** could produce definite consequences).

(4) Must have specific dates and must be restricted to the period of "immediate relief." Periods beyond immediate relief are considered established ongoing operations beyond the initial emergency conditions and these periods are no longer eligible for the Humanitarian Service Medal.

(5) Must have evidence that the emergency assistance was:

(a) Requested by the President of the United States for assistance in the United States (such as, Presidential Emergency Declaration or established contingency plans issued under Presidential authority).

(b) Requested by the DoS for overseas areas.

d. Exclusions. The Humanitarian Service Medal may not be awarded for services rendered in domestic disturbances involving law enforcement, equal rights demonstrations, or protection of properties.

2. Submission of Recommendations

a. Recommendations for the Humanitarian Service Medal originating within a Defense Agency shall be forwarded through appropriate command and staff channels, to include the responsible OSD Principal Staff Assistant, to **DASD(MPP)**.

b. Recommendations for the Humanitarian Service Medal originating within a Military Service shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the **Military** Department concerned.

c. Recommendations for Humanitarian Service Medal involving the Unified Combatant Commands shall be submitted to the DJS.

d. Recommendations for the Humanitarian Service Medal involving U.S. Coast Guard units or personnel shall be submitted to the Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard.

e. When multi-Service participation is involved, an information copy of the recommendation shall be sent to the Secretary of the **Military** Department of the Service members involved.

f. Recommendations must be entered into command channels in two years of the military act or operation to be recognized.

g. Upon approval of the recommendation, the award authority shall direct the command authority, who is an officer in the grade of O-6 or a civilian of equivalent rank, to ensure the action of a Service Record entry and award of the medal to the participating individuals. In the case of multi-Service participation, commanders must ensure the personnel servicing centers of all Service members who participated are informed of action required.

3. Recommendations. Recommendations for the Humanitarian Service Medal must include the following:

a. A written justification fully explaining and attesting to the humanitarian aspects of the services rendered by Service members in the actor operation being recommended. The Humanitarian Service Medal is an INDIVIDUAL award. As such, only those individuals who meet the specific requirements and guidelines in subsection F. 1., above, shall be eligible for award of the Humanitarian Service Medal.

b. Forwarding endorsements that make specific recommendations for approval or disapproval.

c. Endorsement of the **CINC** having authority and/or responsibility for the affected area of responsibility outside the Continental United States.

d. Documentation of the Presidential or the DoS for assistance.

4. Award Approval Authority

a. Award of the Humanitarian Service Medal for the DoD Components shall be authorized by the Military Service Secretaries, DASD(MPP), and the DJS (for organizations reporting to or through Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff) for the Secretary of Defense, and that authority may be **further** delegated. The Secretary of Transportation has delegated approval authority to the Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard, and that authority may not be further delegated.

b. Once the recommendation of an operation or action has been authorized, determination of individual eligibility may be delegated to such level of the operational or administrative chain of command as deemed appropriate by the approval authority. Such authority shall not be delegated below the level of O-6 command or civilian equivalent. It is the prerogative of the service centers to determine the need for **recordkeeping**, such as name lists. Commanders receiving the eligibility delegation must ensure the personnel servicing centers of all participating Service members are informed of the required action. This is true particularly when multi-Service participation occurs.

c. Authority to disapprove recommendations for award of the Humanitarian Service Medal for noncompliance with established criteria contained in this Manual is hereby delegated to the CINCs.

5. **Eligible Operations.** See Appendix G for those acts or operations that have been approved by the Department of Defense for award of the Humanitarian Service Medal.

6. **Subsequent Awards.** No more than one Humanitarian Service Medal shall be awarded to any Service member. For subsequent acts or operations justifying award of the medal, service stars shall be awarded and worn on the suspension and service ribbon of the medal.

7. **Manner of Wearing.** The Humanitarian Service Medal shall be worn immediately after the Armed Forces Service Medal.

8. **Posthumous Awards.** The Humanitarian Service Medal may be awarded posthumously and, when so directed, may be presented to such representatives of the deceased as the Secretary concerned or the Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard, considers appropriate.

J. **MILITARY OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE MEDAL (MOVSM)**

1. **Eligibility Requirements**

a. **General.** The Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal (MOVSM), authorized by E.O. 12830 (reference (aa)), may be awarded to members of the United States Armed Forces and their Reserve components, who subsequent to 31 December 1992, perform outstanding volunteer community service of a sustained, direct and consequential nature.

b. **Specific.** To qualify for award of the MOVSM, a Service member's volunteer service must:

- (1) Be to the civilian community, to include the military family community.
- (2) Be significant in nature and produce tangible results.

(3) Reflect favorably on the Service member's Military Department and the Department of Defense.

(4) Be of a sustained and direct nature.

c. Guidelines

(1) While there is no specific time period to **qualify** for the MOVSM (for example 500 hours of community service within 24 calendar months), approval authorities shall ensure the service to be honored merits the special recognition afforded by this medal. The MOVSM is intended to recognize exceptional community support over time, not a single act or achievement. Further, it is intended to honor direct support of community activities. For the purpose of this award, attending membership meetings or social events of a community service group is not considered qualifying service, while manning a community crisis action telephone line for a sustained period of time is considered qualifying service. The overall level of volunteer participation and impact of an individual's community service is key to determining whether award of the MOVSM is justified.

(2) The MOVSM recognizes service provided to a community over time, therefore multiple awards of the MOVSM during a single tour of duty are not authorized. However, a sustained record of significant community service performed during successive tours may be considered by approval authorities when adjudicating recommendations for award of the MOVSM.

(3) Service recognized by award of the **MOVSM** shall be of a voluntary nature, not detailed or tasked, nor performed as part of a military mission (for example, a unit project).

d. Approval Authority. Award of the MOVSM may be approved by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, the Secretaries of the Military Departments, and the Director of the Joint Staff (for joint commands or organizations that report to or through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff). That authority may be further delegated to commanders authorized to award their Service Achievement Medal under the **ASD(FMP)** Memorandum (reference **(bb)**).

e. Manner of Wearing. The MOVSM shall take precedence immediately after the **Humanitarian Service Medal**.

f. The Secretaries of the **Military** Departments and the Director of the Joint Staff shall establish procedures to ensure compliance with this MOVSM policy as required.

OPTIONAL NOMINATION FORMAT
MILITARY OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS SERVICE MEDAL

I. NOMINEE'S NAME GRADE SSAN SERVICE UNIT SERVICING MIL PERS OFFICE

H. PERIOD FOR WHICH NOMINATED _____

HI. DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

(Provide data for each community activity supported. No more than one activity is required)

A. COMMUNITY ACTIVITY NAME ADDRESS PHONE POINT OF CONTACT

1. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MISSION AND POPULATION SERVED

2. PERIOD OF SERVICE _____

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE RENDERED; IMPACT/RESULTS
ACHIEVED; APPROXIMATE HOURS CONTRIBUTED

B. COMMUNITY ACTIVITY NAME ADDRESS PHONE POINT OF CONTACT

NOTE: TO LIST SERVICE WITH ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES CONTINUE ON PLAIN
BOND PAPER IN THE ABOVE FORMAT.

IV. TOTAL HOURS COMMUNITY SERVICE THIS PERIOD _____

V. SUPERVISOR'S NAME GRADE DUTY TITLE SIGNATURE DATE

VI. COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

VII. COMMANDER'S CERTIFICATION

This individual performed outstanding volunteer service to the community of a sustained, direct and consequential nature and is recommended for award of the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal. Their service throughout this period was honorable.

COMMANDER'S NAME GRADE DUTY TITLE SIGNATURE DATE

VIII. MILITARY SERVICE AWARD APPROVAL AUTHORITY

APPROVED

DISAPPROVED

AWARDING AUTHORITY NAME GRADE DUTY TITLE SIGNATURE DATE

Figure 6-1. Sample format - MOVSM Nomination